

THE START UP GURU

After completing university education, most of the Bangladeshi youth rush to get jobs while very few of them take the risk of starting their own business. Taking a different path, Mohammad Ruhul Kader has not only started his own website, but this initiative called futurestartup.com has been guiding other youngsters to start their own business ventures.

It is an online media and start up platform which showcases interviews and case studies of more than 50 entrepreneurs, activists and social leaders. Through this website, Ruhul also provides one stop solutions to different challenges an aspiring entrepreneur faces in Bangladesh.

"Our mission is to enable young people to take initiatives by applying a proven model that has been in work for centuries all over the world. We start with inspiring people to realize their potential, and then educate them, and then we empower them with resources to start, initiating things," says Ruhul.

With the same mission, Ruhul has recently launched his new project called 'Impact', supported by EMK Centre. In this project Ruhul and his team in futurestartup.com have been travelling to the 64 districts of Bangladesh in search of young entrepreneurs in the rural areas. Their goal is to showcase the struggle and achievement of these less privileged entrepreneurs and also train them on effective business management.

Ruhul says, "I met Md Faruq Hossain in Rangpur who has been weaving woollen mattresses for more than a

decade. Faruq and his craftsmen weave mattresses of exquisite patterns but they have to sell these at a very low cost as they are not experienced in marketing."

"Through this project, I will highlight Faruq's efforts in reviving one of the lost handicrafts of Bangladesh and we will also train him and his team in efficient marketing and management skills," he adds.

Like Faruq, the 'Impact' project is going to expose 50 less privileged entrepreneurs of rural Bangladesh. Besides these, Ruhul also organises a dialogue programme called FS Talk where 40 young aspiring entrepreneurs share their experience and challenges with successful businessmen and take their valuable suggestions.

Ruhul's effort to develop entrepreneurship in Bangladesh has been recognised in the international arena. A renowned UK based online business portal, The Practitioners Hub is working in collaboration with futurestartup.com and regularly publish its articles in their website. Nominated by American Centre, Dhaka, Ruhul has recently visited the Global Entrepreneurship Summit in Kenya as a delegate from Bangladesh. Ruhul says, "From this conference, I learned that Bangladesh has a long way

to go to develop a friendly ecosystem for aspiring entrepreneurs. We still have limited knowledge, resources, technology, and infrastructural shortcomings. However, to achieve the milestones, it is the youth who must come forward to pave the way."

With his initiatives Ruhul has been working to create a positive environment for thousands of young Bangladeshi entrepreneurs. Ruhul's vision is to spread his initiative of encouraging entrepreneurship worldwide to fight the global crisis of unemployment and poverty.

MD SHAHNAWAZ KHAN CHANDAN

PHOTO: PRABIR DAS



Mohammad Ruhul Kader

Claire Chambers is a Lecturer in Global Literature at the University of York, where she teaches twentieth and twenty-first century writing in English from South Asia, the Arab world, and their diasporas. Claire has also published her works in journals such as Postcolonial Text and Contemporary Women's Writing, and is Co-Editor of the Journal of Commonwealth Literature.

When asked to share her first-time experience visiting Bangladesh, Claire describes some of her memorable moments, "So far my experiences have been wonderful. My first day I had an adventure when I was caught in the monsoon rain and then watched a pickpocket get chased by his irate victim down the main road. I was delighted to be given a jute book bag by the conference organisers, since I have read so much about Bangladesh's jute industry. Having said that, I've never seen such traffic jams – sometimes purely of cycle-rickshaws!"

Claire has authored the works 'British Muslim Fictions' and 'Interviews with Contemporary Writers', which featured the young Bangladeshi writer and novelist Tahmima Anam. Claire had been researching about South Asia and its diaspora for years but when she learned that 3 out of 4 of the 7/7 terrorists were from the city of Leeds, she was surprised to find out how little she had been learning about her own city. "A desire to bring my research home led me to the trilogy of books about Muslims in Britain with which I am currently engaged. I felt that since little had been done in this area before, I needed to speak to the authors themselves before writing about their fiction. Tahmima Anam was one of only two writers I interviewed over the phone. Both of these women writers were so eloquent and erudite that I learnt a lot from our conversations."

ENTICED BY WORDS

SALEH ZAMAN



Claire Chambers

PHOTO: COURTESY

Recently Claire appeared as the plenary speaker at University of Liberal Arts, Bangladesh. Her discussion topic was 'Banglaphone fiction', in her words "English-language literature from writers based in London from across the Bengaliyat." Claire mentions that "The Sylhetis' great contribution to the fabric of British life is recognised, for example, in their association with Brick Lane, a popular road of curry houses in East London. However, too often their contribution to literature is reduced to one novel, Brick Lane, Monica Ali's novel about the famous street and its denizens." In her paper Claire, endeavoured to broaden the scope of her discussion by including works such as Sake Dean Mahomed's 'The Travels of Dean Mahomet', published in 1794. "The lives of Mahomed and his family illustrate how settled, how integrated in British life Muslims have been for several centuries, and what huge contributions they have made to the fabric of this nation," she says.

It is intriguing to find a scholar who is so interested by another culture as to study it in-depth and to base their life's works on it. "My interest in this region and its literature was sparked by the gap year I took before going to university in the mid-1990s. I spent the year working as an English language teacher at a mixed-gender school in Peshawar, at least a third of whose pupils were Afghan refugees. It's by now something of a cliché to say that such an experience was 'life-changing' and 'character-building'. In my case, if nothing else the year away handed me my career."

Claire went onto study English Literature at Newcastle University in the UK and found herself deeply fascinated by Post Colonial and Indian Literature. She hopes 2010 will be a decade of success for Bangladeshi writers. "They certainly deserve it!" she concludes. ■

QUIRKY SCIENCE

MOLECULES ON COMET

Organic molecules never previously observed in comets, a relatively varied structure on the surface but fairly homogeneous interior, organic compounds forming agglomerates rather than being dispersed in the ice: these are just some of first results provided by Philae on the surface of comet Churi. This work, carried out as part of ESA's Rosetta mission, involved researchers from the CNRS, Aix-Marseille Université, Université Joseph Fourier, Université Nice Sophia Antipolis, UPEC, UPMC, Université Paris-Sud, Université Toulouse III – Paul Sabatier and UVSQ, with support from CNES. They are published on July 31, 2015 as part of a set of eight articles in the journal Science. These in situ findings, which contain a wealth of completely new information, reveal several differences in comparison with previous observations of comets and current models.

The landing of the Philae module provided the cometary rendezvous mission Rosetta with an exceptional opportunity: that of studying in situ a cometary nucleus (from its surface to its internal structure), 67P/Churyumov-Gerasimenko (aka Churi). This is likely to shed light on these small celestial bodies that date back to the origins of the Solar System. The data collected by the lander's ten instruments on November 12-14, 2014 (during the 63 hours that followed Philae's separation from Rosetta) added to the observations carried out by the Rosetta orbiter1, while its bouncing touchdown on the comet was actually a source of extra information.



A MIMIC OF NATURE

The concept of walking on water might sound supernatural, but in fact it is quite a natural phenomenon. Many small living creatures leverage water's surface tension to maneuver themselves around. One of the most complex maneuvers, skipping on water, is achieved by a species of semi-aquatic insects called water striders that not only skip along water's surface but also generate enough upward thrust with their legs to launch themselves airborne from it.

Now, emulating this natural form of water-based locomotion, an international team of scientists from Seoul National University, Korea (SNU), Harvard's Wyss Institute for Biologically Inspired Engineering, and the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences, has unveiled a novel robotic insect that can jump off of water's surface. In doing so, they have revealed new insights into the natural mechanics that allow water striders to jump from rigid ground or fluid water with the same amount of power and height.

The water strider, whose legs have slightly curved tips, employs a rotational leg movement to aid its takeoff from the water surface, discovered co-senior author Ho-Young Kim who is Professor in SNU's Department of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and Director of SNU's Micro Fluid Mechanics Lab. Kim, a former Wyss Institute Visiting Scholar, worked with the study's co-first author Eunjin Yang, a graduate researcher at SNU's Micro Fluid Mechanics lab, to collect water striders and take extensive videos of their movements to analyze the mechanics that enable the insects to skim on and jump off water's surface.

Source: sciencedaily.com

SPIRITUAL LEADERS

It is a truth that the intellect is limited in its abilities to fix the world's problems. From history we have witnessed the power of emotion in creating massive positive changes in the world. Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King's peaceful protests, that combined their intelligence and education with the inner force of emotion and idealistic vision, left an impact on the world that cold hard intellect alone could never inspire. During a mass crisis like a famine or a natural disaster, victims remain in a state of incredible shock in which psychological pain and fear gains dominance over physical challenges. People in suffering are as emotionally undernourished as they are physically depleted.

Oftentimes it is the fear of one's cries being unheard, one's call for help being unanswered, the sense of hopelessness and tragedy that people suffer from the most. In times like these, perhaps hugs are more powerful medicine than antibiotics or vitamins.

Mother Teresa, one of the greatest humanitarians of all time, advocated the power of love to heal the world's pain. Instead of using wealth, political power or superior intellect to fix the problems of the world, she relied upon her ability to express care and love to bring light to the lives of countless sufferers.

Mother Teresa was born on

August 26, 1910 in the Republic of Macedonia and baptised as Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu. Her father passed away when she was only 8 years old which led her to develop a close relationship with her mother Drana Bojaxhiu, who had a deep influence on her. From an early age Drana Bojaxhiu taught her daughter the value of charity often telling her: "My child, never eat a single mouthful unless you are sharing it with others."

In 1928, after finishing primary and secondary education, Agnes became a nun, marking her entry into the spiritual path. She went onto perform her service first to Ireland and then to Calcutta, to teach at Saint Mary's High School for girls. During her time at the school she became fluent in speaking Bengali and Hindi and actively cared for

impoverished students while teaching them history and geography. In 1937, she took her Final Profession of Vows, "to a life of poverty, obedience and chastity."

Mother Teresa continued to teach at Saint Mary's and went onto becoming its principal in 1944. However, on September 10, 1946, a spiritual experience would change the course of her life drastically. While riding a train to the Himalayan Foothills for a retreat, she had a vision in which her spiritual purpose was revealed to her. Mother Teresa was instructed to leave teaching and proceed to the slums of Calcutta to help the starving and the sick. In 1948, after finally receiving permission from the Archbishop, Mother Teresa left her

convent to pursue her life's purpose. After completing six months of basic medical training she stepped foot into the slums of Calcutta to reach out to anyone in need of care.

Mother Teresa's work soon took an organisational form, developing into the congregation, Missionaries of Charity. She

started her work in a broken-down building which the government donated for her work, starting an open-air school and a shelter for the homeless. As the numbers of her congregation expanded she began receiving donations from all over the world. Soon her efforts led to the development of a colony for lepers, a nursing home and family

clinic, an orphanage and multiple mobile health clinics.

In 1979 Mother Teresa was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. With no need for any material possessions other than 2 saris, which she wore interchangeably, Mother Teresa requested that the money being spent to honor her with a banquet be donated to charity instead. By the time of her death on September 5, 1997, more than 4000 missionaries around the world dedicated themselves to her cause.

Having touched the lives of millions with her nurture, Mother Teresa left the world an important teaching: "We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty." She was declared a saint by the Catholic Church in 2003. ■



THE POWER OF LOVE

SHAHAN HASNAEN